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HIGHROADS OF SIKH HISTORY

BOOK ONE

BY
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PRINCIPAL, MAHENDRA COLLEGE, PATIALA



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PREFATORY NOTE

THIS series consists of three books. The first contains a few important incidents from Sikh History ; the second contains biographical sketches of some of the eminent persons connected with that history ; and the third gives the complete story of the Sikh people from the beginning up to the present day.

The stories as given are, of necessity, simple in scope and design and may be augmented by the teacher for the purpose of illustration according to the needs of the students.

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A GOOD BARGAIN

GURU Nanak was a great man. He was also a good man. He loved God. He loved men. He tried to do good to them.

He was not like us. We wish to make money. We wish to live in ease. But Guru Nanak did not like these things.

Even as a child he showed his greatness. He did not care for rich food. He did not like to put on fine clothes. He spent his time in thinking of God.

His father asked him to make money. But Guru Nanak did not like to make money.

His father asked him to look after the cattle. But he did not like to do this. His father asked him again and again. He therefore took the cattle to the fields one day. But he soon forgot all about them. They went where they liked.

Then his father tried to make him a farmer. But he did not care to be a farmer. He wanted to think only of God,

His father grew sad. He talked to Guru Nanak's mother.

"What shall I do with him?" he asked. "He is so lazy. He does not want to do anything."

"Give him another chance," said his mother.

His father gave him another chance. He gave Guru Nanak some money. He said, "Go, my son, and make a good bargain with it."

Guru Nanak took the money. He left his home. He came to a place called ***Khara Sauda***. It is near Chuharkana, in the district of Sheikhupura. There he met some men. They were good men. But they were very poor. They had no clothes. They were hungry. They were without food for many days. He felt sorry for them.

He ran to the nearest village. He

bought food and clothes for them. He spent all his money in doing this. He brought flour and ghee and other things. With these things the poor men made a good meal. They were happy. At this he also felt happy. He thought he had made a good bargain.

He came back to his village. He was afraid of his father. His father would ask him where he had spent his money. Guru Nanak, therefore, hid himself near a tree. The tree is still there. It is thick and green. It looks like a tent. It is, therefore, called the *Tambu Sahib*.

Guru Nanak did not go home. He was hiding near the tree. His father looked out for him in many places. At last he found him. But the boy had no money with him. This made the father angry. He gave his son a slap on the face.

"What have you done with the money?" he asked.

Guru Nanak replied, "Father, I have made a good bargain with it. I met some poor people near Chuharkana. They were hungry and had no clothes. I spent the money on them. I bought food and clothes for them. I did not buy salt and pepper with the money. These things would not have made me happy. By helping the poor I have done a good thing. It has made me happy. It is a good bargain."

Questions

1. Why did the father of Guru Nanak grow sad ?
2. Why was Nanak sent to Khara Sauda ?
3. Whom did he meet there ?
4. How did he spend the money given to him ?

GURU NANAK AND BABAR

GURU Nanak used to travel a great deal. Once he went to Eminabad in the district of Gujranwala. There he stayed with Bhai Lalo.

Bhai Lalo was a carpenter. He was very poor. But he was a good man. He loved God. That is why Guru Nanak stayed with him.

At that time Babar came to India. He was a great Mughal. He wanted to take India. He fell upon Eminabad. The people of Eminabad fought hard. This made Babar angry.

Babar's soldiers were very cruel. They killed all those who came in their way. They took away all they had. They pulled down their houses. This made the people very unhappy.

But all were not killed. Some were able to save themselves. Among those were Guru Nanak and his companion Mardana. They were not of Eminabad. So Babar's soldiers did not kill them.

They let them live. But they did not let them go where they liked. They were kept in a jail. They were made to work.

The Guru had to carry a load on his head. Mardana had to look after a horse.

Do you think this made the Guru unhappy? No, he was quite happy even then. He sang songs about God. It is said that while he sang, Mardana played on a rebeck. Then a strange thing happened. The horse in Mardana's care walked after him without being told to do so. The Guru's load did not rest on his head. It moved over his head wherever he went.

The governor of the jail was filled with wonder. So he told Babar all about this. The emperor felt sorry for what he had done to Eminabad. "I should not have pulled down this city," he said to himself. "It has such a good man as Guru Nanak in it." Then he made up his mind to go to the jail. He wished to see the good man for himself.

He went to the jail. He saw many things there. He saw women grinding



GURU NANAK

corn. They all looked very sad and unhappy. He went to Guru Nanak. The Guru was lost in thought. He did not move his hands. His hand-mill went on by itself. He did not touch it.

The emperor tried to awaken the Guru, but could not. The Guru could not bear to see the unhappiness of the women. He was sad to see that so many good men had been killed. All this filled his kind heart with pity. He, therefore, shut his eyes. He forgot all about himself.

At last he awoke. He then sang a song. He said, "O God ! you have always been kind to your people. You have always saved them from unhappiness. Come and help these unhappy people."

The words of this song moved the heart of the emperor. He felt sorry for what he had done. He asked Guru Nanak to accept from him a present. But the Guru would not take anything. At last he asked

Babar to let all the people of Eminabad out of jail.

The emperor did so. Then the people went home happily. They blessed the Guru. He had been very kind to them. He had asked Babar to let them out.

This was not the only thing he did. When he looked about him, the Guru saw many others in the jail. They were all very sad. They looked hungry and tired. The Guru felt for them. He was so sorry for them that he was once again lost in thought. When he awoke, he sang a song. This moved Babar again to pity. He let them out of jail, and gave them presents. They were very happy.

This pleased the Guru much. At that time Babar said, "Good man, bless me ! Pray to God that I should be happy."

The Guru said, "You are the Emperor of India, but your empire will not be for long. Remember that you should be just. Respect all good men, and give

up wine and gambling. Show kindness to those who are placed under you. Always remember to pray to God."

These were good words, which Guru Nanak spoke to the emperor. Do you not think they are as good for us as they were for Babar ?

Questions

1. Who was Bhai Lalo ?
2. Who was Babar ?
3. What work was Nanak made to do in the jail ?
4. What did Nanak say to Babar ?

SHEIKH SAJJAN

GURU Nanak did many great things. One of these was to change bad men into good men. He knew how to make the bad good.

Sheikh Sajjan was a robber. He lived at a place called Tulamba, near

Multan. It was during the time of Guru Nanak. Though Sajjan was a bad man, he did not look like a robber. The people thought him to be kind and good. He spread his carpet every morning and prayed to God. He had a rosary in his hand. With its help he repeated the name of God. He did this many times every day.

He did many other things to show that he was good. He built a temple and a mosque in his village. He was very kind to the travellers and strangers who came to his village. If the stranger was a Hindu, he could stay in his temple. If he was a Muhammadan, he could go to the mosque. There they could pass the night as the guests of Sheikh Sajjan.

But Sheikh Sajjan was not what he seemed to be. At heart he was cruel. He liked to kill and rob people. This is how he did it. At night he would ask his guests to go to bed. As

soon as they fell asleep, he would throw them into a well. He would then take away all they had.

Guru Nanak once came to this village, and spent a night there. As soon as the Sheikh saw the Guru he said to himself, "This man must be rich, for he looks so happy. I hope I shall get much money out of him."

Thinking that Guru Nanak was rich, Sheikh Sajjan treated him well. When night came on, he asked Guru Nanak to go to sleep. The Guru then began to sing. He always did so before going to bed. The Sheikh listened to the song. It said, "Bronze is very bright to look at. But if you rub it, it blackens your hands. So some people are thought to be good, but they are really very bad. These men are like painted houses. These houses are white on the outside ; but are empty from within. So these men are thought to be honest, but really they are bad. A man

should not only show that he is good, but he should be really good at heart.”

The song was beautiful. The singer was a good man. Both these things moved Sheikh Sajjan's heart. He felt sorry that he had been so bad and cruel. He, therefore, fell at the feet of the Guru. He asked the Guru to forgive him.

The Guru said, “God will forgive you, only if you do two things. Tell me what evil things you have done. At the same time, return to the people all you have robbed them of.”

The Sheikh told Guru Nanak that he had killed many men. He also said that he would give away to the poor all he had.

After this he became a follower of the Guru. It is said the first Sikh temple was built at the place where Sheikh Sajjan had met Guru Nanak. The Sheikh himself became one of the greatest teachers of the Sikh religion.

Questions

1. Who was Sheikh Sajjan ?
2. How did he look ?
3. How did he rob people of their money ?
4. What did Guru Nanak say to him ?

GURU NANAK AT HARDWAR

GURU Nanak was very fond of travelling. With Mardana, the Muhammadan singer, the Guru went to many places in the Punjab, the United Provinces, Bengal, the South of India, and Ceylon. It is said that he went even to Mecca, the holy place of the Muhammadans.

At all these places the Guru did wonderful things. Many times the people did not know why the Guru did those things. Those people were not wise. But we know better. The Guru wished to tell us how to know the true from the false.

In this lesson you will be told what the Guru did at Hardwar. It will seem strange to you, but it is not without its meaning.

Hardwar, as you know, lies on the bank of the river Ganges. It is a holy city. People from all parts of India go there. They go there to throw the bones and ashes of the dead into the river. By doing so they think they can make the dead happy. They also like to take a dip in the Ganges. This, they think, will do their souls good.

Once Guru Nanak went to Hardwar. There he saw a large number of people. He felt sorry to see them. All these men wanted to be good. But they did not know what to do. They thought that a bath in the Ganges could do much. That was not so. It could make their bodies clean. Could it make their hearts also clean ?

The Guru saw some persons standing in the river. Their faces were turned towards the rising sun. They were all throwing water towards the east. They hoped that the water thus thrown would

reach their dead forefathers. They thought it would make them happy.

The Guru also went into the river, and stood amongst them. Then he turned his face towards the west. He began to throw water towards the west. This looked very strange to the people. Some thought the Guru was a Muhammadan.

“But what right has a Muhammadan to come here ?” they asked.

Others thought he was a Hindu. But they thought he was not wise, and did not know what he was doing.

The Guru knew what they were thinking and saying about him. So he stopped and said to a man near him, “Good man, what are all these people doing ? Why are they throwing water towards the east ?”

The man replied, “Because, by doing so they will make the souls of the dead happy.”

“How far away do the dead live ?” asked Nanak.

To this there was no reply. But another man, who was very old and wise, said "They live thousands of miles away."

On hearing this the Guru again began to throw water towards the west. At this he was stopped by a man. He asked the Guru, "What do you mean by so doing this?"

"I am trying to water my fields. They lie to the west of this place," replied the Guru. "Before I came here I sowed seed in my fields. But as no rain fell the crops dried up. I hope to make them grow again. Will not the crops grow with the water that I am throwing towards them?"

"How far are your fields from here?" asked one of the men who stood near him.

"Only a few hundred miles away," was the answer.

At this they all laughed and said, "How can you water your fields in this way?"

Are they not far away from here ?”

To this the Guru replied, “If the water cannot reach my fields, how can it reach the dead ? My fields are only a few hundred miles from here, but your dead are thousands of miles away.”

On hearing this the people did not know what to say.

Questions

1. Write something about Mecca.
2. What do you know about Hardwar ?
3. Why did some persons at Hardwar throw water towards the east ?
4. Why did Guru Nanak throw water towards the west ?

GURU ANGAD AND THE PROUD MONK

GURU Nanak wanted Bhai Lahna to be the Guru after his death. Bhai Lahna was afterwards known as Guru Angad. In choosing Bhai Lahna as the next Guru, Nanak passed over his own two sons. He

thought they were not fit for that great work. He was very pleased with Bhai Lahna. Guru Nanak used to say to his wife, "Sri Chand and Lakhmi Das are our sons. But Lahna, who obeys me, is more dear to me."

In truth, Bhai Lahna was very obedient to Guru Nanak. In the cold winter as well as in the hot summer he was always ready to obey his master. If the Guru asked him to build a wall, he was ready to do that work. If the Guru asked him to carry a bundle of grass on his head, he did his work gladly.

To obey the Guru was the greatest joy of Bhai Lahna's life. Once the Guru woke him up at midnight. He also woke up his sons. He asked them to wash his clothes. The sons would not do this work. But Bhai Lahna took up the work at once and did it gladly.

Bhai Lahna did not only obey the Guru he had also faith in him. Guru Nanak used

to rise every day three hours before morning. He used to go to the Ravi for a bath. After his bath he used to sing holy songs. When the sun rose in the east, he used to come back home. Bhai Lahna always used to rise before Guru Nanak awoke. He then used to go with the Guru to the river. There he used to do all that he was asked to do.

Bhai Lahna was a very humble man. He had no pride. He remained humble, even when he became the Great Guru of the Sikhs. He came to be called Guru Angad. A fine story is told of him.

Guru Angad lived at Khadur. It is a well-known Sikh town near Tarn Taran in the district of Amritsar. The people of that town had great faith in the Guru. They thought he could show them the way to God.

In that town lived a monk. He was known as the Tapa. This man was much respected by the Jats of the district. So he was very proud of his goodness. He used

to tell people that he could put an end to all their troubles. He also used to tell them that he was a great saint. He could, therefore, drive away all evil from the world.

But he thought ill of Guru Angad. He told everybody that the Guru was not a good man.

At Khadur there lived a Jat chief. He did not care much for the Guru. But he had great faith in the Tapa.

The chief had a son whom he loved much. Once his son fell ill. He tried all kinds of cures, but the boy did not get well. He got worse and worse. Then somebody said to him, "Take your son to the Guru. Ask him to cure him."

At first the chief did not like to do so. At last he brought his son to the Guru. The Guru looked at him and said, "You will get well, if you do not drink wine. You should serve holy men and repeat God's Name. These things would do you much good." The young man said

he would do so. By the mercy of God he became well again.

Now a strange thing came to pass. Everybody in the village thought that the Guru had cured the headman's son. This added to the people's respect for the Guru. They all thought him to be a holy man.

The Tapa came to hear this. He said that he himself had cured the chief's son. The Guru had not done it. The Guru could not do such things. Someone told the Guru what the Tapa had said. But he replied, "Let others speak ill of me, but I will not speak ill of them." After this he forgot all about the Tapa.

But the Tapa had not forgotten the Guru. He thought ill of him. He wished to do him harm. He waited for the time when he could put the Guru to shame.

It so happened that one year no rains fell. The corn became dear, and the

cattle began to die. All the Jats of the town went together to the Tapa. They begged him to make the rain fall.

“Why have you come to me for help ?” asked he. “Go to Guru Angad in whom you have faith. You are well punished now for your sins. Why did you leave me who am a saint ? Why did you go to Angad ? Has he not a wife and children ? This comes of serving a man of the world. I will do nothing for you.”

When they heard this, the Jats said, “How can we ask the Guru to help us now ? He does not care for anything. He will never say that he can bring about rainfall.” .

To this the Tapa replied. “If you turn him out of the city, you will have rain in twenty-four hours. But if he stays here, let him then make the rain fall. I will not help you.”

The Jats then went to the Guru. They asked him to bring down rain. The

Guru replied. "It is not in the power of man to do so. Only God can make the rain fall."

The Jats said. "The Tapa says he will get us everything, if you leave the town. If you stay here, he will not help us."

The Guru at once made up his mind to leave. His only wish was to help the people.

Many people begged him to change his mind, but he did not listen to them. He left the place.

Though the Guru had left, yet there was no rain. The Jats now lost their heads, and beat the Tapa badly. They also said to him, "You are a liar. You said you would do what you could never do. You made us do harm to the Guru. We cannot forgive you for all this." Then they went together to the Guru and asked him to forgive them and to come back.

The Guru came back to the town.

There he was told that the Tapa had been beaten by the Jats. He really felt sorry for it. He said to the people, "If you want to follow me, you should learn to forgive even those who do harm to you."

Questions

1. Who was Bhai Lahna ?
2. What sort of man was Guru Angad ?
3. Who was the Tapa ?
4. Why was he against Guru Angad ?

GURU HAR GOBIND IN GWALIOR FORT

AFTER the death of Guru Arjun, his son Har Gobind became the Guru. Baba Buddha was asked to place him on the ***gaddi***. The Guru put on two swords. One was to show that he was the leader of the Sikhs in religion. The other was a mark of worldly power.

Other Gurus had lived in peace. They had not had to fight. But Guru Har Gobind had to act differently. He had to be a fighter as well as a religious man. He said, "In the Guru's house there should always be two things. He should do acts of charity. He should give people what they want. He should have also arms to punish those who did evil."

Guru Har Gobind, therefore, said to the Sikhs, "Bring me arms and horses, and not money." He had a bodyguard of fifty-two brave and fearless Sikhs. They were ready to die for him at any time.

Guru Har Gobind was fond of hunting. In the morning he taught religion to the Sikhs in the temple. Then he took his morning meal. In the afternoon he went to the far-off forests to hunt. At that time bold Sikh hunters went with him. He had also hounds and hawks with him.

Thus the Guru was a soldier as well as a saint. It is said his glory was far greater

than that of the Gurus who had lived before him. While they had sat upon couches, he sat upon a throne.

All this was made known to Emperor Jahangir by one Chandu. He was the same man who had brought about the death of Guru Arjun. The emperor was told that the Guru had become proud. It was time that the proud Guru should be taught a lesson.

Jahangir, therefore, sent two men to bring Guru Har Gobind to his court. When these men came to the Guru at Amritsar, the Sikhs felt much troubled. They feared lest Guru Har Gobind should come to grief. Had not his father also come to grief like that ?

Some wanted him to go. Others advised him not to obey the king. The Guru's mother was the most unhappy of all. "When my husband left for the Mughal emperor's court," she said, "I was very sad. Now that you are going

there too, I do not know what I shall do. How can I live without you?" But the Guru wanted to go. So he took leave of his mother and the Sikhs. He said to them, "Do not be afraid. God will look after me. He will see that no harm comes to me."

The Guru reached Delhi. There he met the Emperor Jahangir. He had many talks with the Guru about God and other religious matters. These talks showed to the emperor that the Guru was wise and noble.

One day Jahangir and the Guru went out hunting. In a forest the emperor was attacked by a tiger. The Guru saw this. He at once drew his sword and killed the tiger. Thus he saved the emperor's life.

This showed to the emperor what the Guru was. He was strong of arm as well as noble of heart. After that he took the Guru with him wherever he went.

Wherever the Guru went, the people showed him great respect. The emperor knew all this. He thought that if this went on, the Guru would become too strong for him. Something must be done to save the state from harm.

He asked the advice of his ministers. They advised Jahangir to shut up the Guru in a fort. When he was away from the people, they would forget him.

The emperor acted on this advice. He sent the Guru as a state prisoner to the fort of Gwalior.

In the fort the Guru was well received. The Governor, Hari Das, felt happy at his coming. The Rajahs who were shut up there felt happy. They all thought that the Guru would set them free from their troubles. They knew that the fort would become a happier place, so long as the Guru lived there.

And they were right in thinking so. The Guru felt pity for all those who were

there. He tried his best to make them happy.

He did not think it right that the Rajahs should wear dirty clothes. He did not like that they should not have enough food to eat. He, therefore, asked the Governor to give them clean clothes and good food. This was done. Thus the prison was changed for them from a place of trouble into a place of happiness.

But though the Guru did much to make these Rajahs happy, he himself went without food for a long time. He would not take the food given to him in the prison. He wanted food that had been bought with money earned by honest work. Some Sikhs, therefore, worked at a brass-smith's shop, and bought food for the Guru with their earnings. This food the Guru took with great pleasure.

The emperor had thought that the people would forget the Guru, when he

was in jail. It was not so. The more the Guru suffered, the more the people respected him.

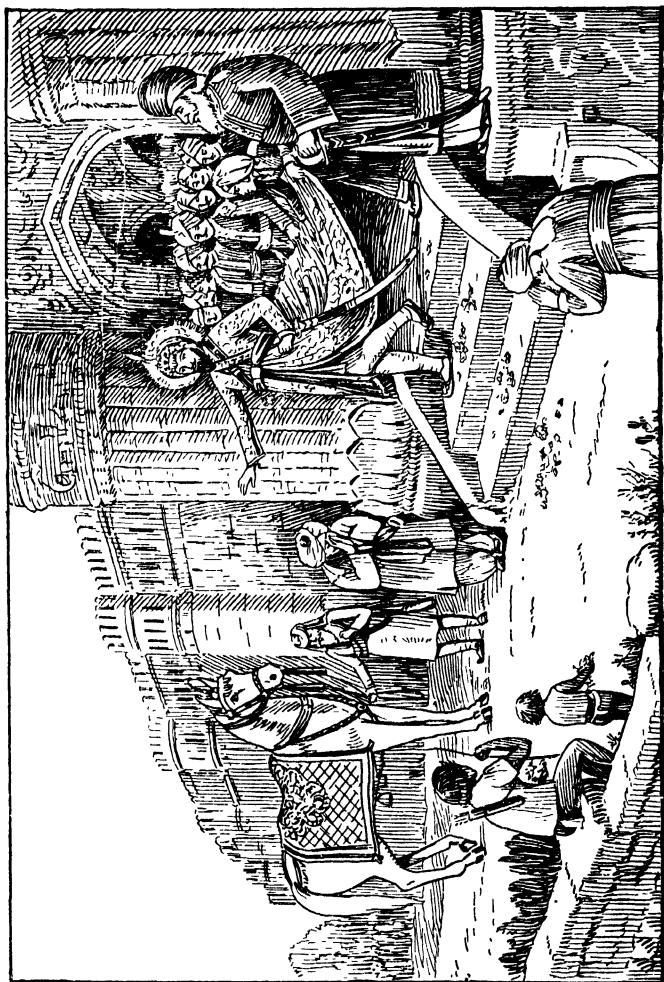
So they went in large numbers to Gwalior. There they could not see him. But they kissed the walls of the fort in which the Guru was kept. After doing so, they felt happy and went back to their homes.

Even some Muhammadans were sorry for the Guru. They spoke to the emperor about his goodness. At last the emperor found that they were right. He therefore, set him free.

When the Guru was about to leave, the Rajahs in the fort were very unhappy. The Guru, therefore, would not leave the fort. "I will go," he said to the Rajahs, "only when you are set free."

The Guru then said to the emperor, "If you free these Rajahs, you will win their affection."

The emperor was quite pleased, and



GURU HAR GOBIND LEAVING GWALIOR FORT

ordered, "Only those who can hold the skirt of the Guru can leave the fort."

On hearing this the Guru put on a coat having fifty-two pieces. Each Rajah took hold of a piece and came out.

All thanked the Guru for this. "You have saved us," they said. "You helped us when we were inside the jail. You have also helped us in getting out of it."

The place in the fort where the Guru lived is called ***Bandi Chhor Baba***.

Questions

1. Why did Guru Har Gobind put on two swords ?
2. Why was he sent for to Delhi by Jahangir ?
3. Why did the king shut him up in a fort ?
4. How was he set free ?

GURU HAR RAI AND THE FLOWERS

"RISE early in the morning. Fill your hearts with the love of God. Always do acts of charity. Speak gently. Be humble. Do good to others. Do not eat

or sleep too much. Spend only what you earn with your own hands. Day and night try to be with good men. Sing with them the Guru's hymns."

What would you think of the man who spoke such noble words? Surely you would think he was a noble man. He was good as well as humble, God-fearing as well as kind.

Guru Har Rai was really such a person. He was known for his simplicity far and near. He never ate rich food, but lived on simple food. He did not sleep much. He took some hours from his sleep every night. He spent them in thinking of God.

He received well all the rich and the poor. He was kind to all. Whatever things the Sikhs brought for him, he gave away to the poor. He told the Sikhs to open free kitchens. There they should give good to all strangers.

He was very noble. He always forgave his enemies. As soon as they felt sorry for what they had done, he became kind to them again. Once the eldest son of Shah Jahan fell ill. The emperor asked the Guru to give him some medicine. The Guru at once forgot that Shah Jahan had been his enemy. He sent him medicine.

Thus he was very kind to men. He was kind even to birds and animals and flowers.

He was fond of hunting. He caught animals in the forest. But he did not kill them. He kept them in a garden.

He had a garden of his own. There these animals were kept. His followers used to visit this garden. They felt happy when they saw the animals play.

He was very fond of the deer. But he did not catch the deer for their flesh. He loved to keep them in his garden.

He showed kindness even to deadly

snakes. His heart melted if he found one in trouble.

One day when he was hunting, he saw a snake. It was badly wounded. It was able to crawl with great difficulty. Its skin was full of worms. They were giving it much trouble. The Guru felt its pain. He was moved to great pity. He, therefore, freed it from its pain.

He was kind to all men and birds. He would not hurt even flowers. A story is told about his childhood. It shows what a kind heart he had.

The Guru liked flowers very much. Above all he loved the rose. It gave him great pleasure to spend his time in his garden. There he looked at beautiful flowers. He praised God, their Maker.

One day he was passing through a bed of roses. There were roses everywhere. They were so beautiful and pink. The Guru felt very happy to see them.

These flowers had such a fine smell. They had such a beautiful colour. Their leaves were so green and soft. He then said, "O God ! You are great. You make such beautiful things !"

As he was moving about in that bed of flowers, a rose fell down at his feet. You will understand how it happened. He did not pluck the flower himself. It just fell off by the touch of his coat. It was a simple thing, you would say. Probably the future Guru did not care much for it.

But the child Har Rai was not like us. We like to kill animals. We shoot birds. We pull up trees. We pluck flowers. We do all these things for mere play. But Har Rai did not like to do these things.

He began to cry at this. He was very sorry that the flower had been broken. He asked himself, "Why have I harmed this flower ? I feel as if I have been cruel



to someone who is dear to me.”

What was he to do then? He said to himself, “This time I have been careless. I will not be careless again. I shall now move about in such a way that no flower is torn away from its place.”

He, therefore, wiped the tears from his face. Then he pulled up his coat with his own small hands. He did so, because he did not like to harm any flower. After this he began to move about once more in that bed of roses.

Questions

1. Why did Shah Jahan send for Guru Har Rai ?
2. How did Guru Har Rai free the snake from its pain ?
3. What did Guru Har Rai do to the animals caught by him in hunting ?
4. What lesson do you learn from this story ?

GURU TEGH BAHADUR AND DHIR MAL

A POET has said that there are three rules for doing things. They are the Iron Rule, the Silver Rule, and the Golden Rule. Those who act upon the Iron Rule always do evil for good. The Silver Rule asks us to do good to those who are kind to us. But the Golden Rule is the best of all. It says that we should do good for evil. In other words, we should help even those who are against us.

In this story you will be told how Guru Tegh Bahadur acted upon the Golden Rule. He did so by forgiving the enemy, when he could have done harm to him.

After the death of Guru Har Gobind, his son Tegh Bahadur had gone to Bakala. There he lived with his mother and wife. Now it so happened that Guru Har Krishan had said, when he was dying,

that the next Guru would be found there.

This filled the hearts of many members of the Guru's family with joy. Everyone of them thought that he would be the next Guru. Many of them even set themselves up as Gurus as soon as Guru Har Krishan died.

This gave much trouble to the Sikhs. "Whom shall we call our real Guru? Who is to receive our offerings? Who will teach us to be good and noble?" These were the questions they asked themselves.

At last a Sikh came from Gujarat. His name was Makhan Shah. He was a trader of the Lubana class. He brought with him five hundred gold mohars. Why did he do so?

Once he was sailing on the sea in a ship. One day the sea became very rough. Everyone thought that the ship was going to sink. They all feared they would lose

their lives. Makhan Shah prayed, "O God, save our ship. O God, save also the lives of all. I promise to offer five hundred gold mohars to the Guru."

Now it so happened that everything went well. The ship reached the port safely. All lives were saved.

After some time Makhan Shah went to Bakala with the money. There he saw many men calling themselves Gurus. He did not know to whom to give the money. At last he thought of a plan which would satisfy them all.

He visited the Gurus one after another, and gave two gold mohars to each. Everyone of them was pleased, and blessed him. He found one strange thing about them. Each of these Gurus praised himself, but called all the others false.

This led him to think that all of them were false. He thought that he had yet to find the true Guru.

At last he found him when he saw Tegh

Bahadur. No sooner did he give him two gold mohars than the real Guru asked him, "Where are the rest ? You promised to give five hundred gold mohars to the Guru."

At this Makhan Shah fell at his feet, and call him the True Guru. Then he went to the top of the house, and shouted, "I have found the True Guru ! I have found the True Guru !"

On hearing this many Sikhs came and placed Tegn Bahadur on the Guru's throne. After this Guru Tegn Bahadur became the leader of the Sikhs. He taught them the Sikh religion.

Dhir Mal was a member of the Guru's family. He himself wished to be the Guru. But others did not like him. So they did not have him. They had Guru Tegn Bahadur instead.

Dhir Mal, therefore, became the Guru's deadly enemy. With the help of other evil men he tried to kill the Guru.

Dhir Mal sent his man to take the Guru's life. This man fired many shots at the Guru. One of these struck him, but it did not kill him.

The Guru was wounded. This gave his enemies a chance to harm him further.

They took away some of his valuable things. When the Guru heard of this, he did not feel sorry. The Guru was one of those men who are always calm. In joy as well as in sorrow, in pain as well as in pleasure, he trusted in God.

Dhir Mal had done all this, but the Guru did not like to punish him. The Sikhs, however, wanted to punish the evil man. So they went in a body to his house.

There they found the door shut against them. But still they entered the house by force. Then they took hold of a servant of Dhir Mal. He was the same man who had tried to kill the Guru. They tied his hand behind his back, and brought him

to the holy man. They also brought back the valuable things that Dhir Mal had taken away. More than this, they took all that Dhir Mal had in his house. With all these things they came to the Guru.

When the Guru looked at Dhir Mal, his servant and his friends, they hung down their heads in shame. Tears filled their eyes. They seemed to be sorry for what they had done. "We have done wrong, O True King," they said. "Forgive us. You are like a father to us and, though we have acted like bad children, be kind to us."

When the Guru saw their heads bowed down with shame, he forgave them. He also returned their things to them.

But the Sikhs did not like this. They said, "The biter should be bitten. Why should the Guru be kind to an evil man?" To this the Guru replied, "It is good to forgive. It is better to

forgive an enemy than to go to a holy place. Practise forgiveness always, O true Sikhs !”

Questions

1. What are the three rules of conduct ?
2. Write all you know about Makhan Shah.
3. Who was Dhir Mal ?
4. How was he treated by the Sikhs ?

BHAI KANHAIYA

FOR a long time the Sikh Gurus lived in peace. They did not have to fight. They prayed to God and sang His praises. They gave food to strangers. They taught the Sikhs to do the same.

But there came a time when saints had to become soldiers. This does not mean that the Sikhs now did not sing the praises of God. They still sang hymns and served others. But sometimes they had to fight for their religion. Sometimes they had even to die on the battlefield. How did this come about ? How did the saint become a holy fighter ?

Guru Arjun Dev had suffered much at the hands of the emperor of Delhi. He was in the end put to death by the emperor.

The ruling princes gave much trouble to Guru Tegh Bahadur also. He had to give his life to serve the cause of his religion. All these things taught one thing to the Sikhs. They must fight if they were to live.

Under Guru Har Gobind the Sikhs learnt how to fight. He asked them to carry arms and to ride horses. He taught them the use of the sword. They learnt how to shoot. They also learnt how to march to the battlefield. Thus they became good soldiers.

Then they found an able leader. He was Guru Gobind Singh. He led them to battle against the enemies of their religion. He was a great man. He was well known for his bravery and goodness. He was strong and handsome. He rode a dark horse whose saddle was covered

with gold. In his turban there was a crest set with jewels. He carried a bow in his hand which was painted green. From his belt there hung a sharp sword. On his wrist there sat a fierce hawk.

The people honoured the Guru greatly. They wished to be brave and good like him. The Sikhs came to him from all places. They all wished to fight under his leadership. They were all willing to die for their religion.

These Sikhs were not like other soldiers. They were not cruel. They did not find pleasure in killing men. If we read about the battles in which Guru Gobind Singh fought, we shall find many acts of bravery and kindness. Of one such act we are going to tell you here.

The enemies of Guru Gobind Singh once attacked Anandpur, the home of the Guru. They placed their soldiers on all sides. They wanted to drive the Guru out of the place. The Guru, however, fought

bravely. His enemies found it difficult to turn him out.

The battle was going on between the Sikhs and their enemies. At that time a Sikh was seen going here and there over the battlefield. He was Bhai Kanhaiya. He was not a fighter, but still he liked to serve the Guru. So he thought to himself, "I shall go to the battlefield. I shall give the wounded and the dying soldiers water to drink. Thus shall I be able to do my bit for the Guru."

He moved freely among the soldiers. Guns roared, swords shone, and arrows flew in the air. But Bhai Kanhaiya was not afraid. He gave water to the dying men. They drank the water and opened their eyes. They blessed the old man.

He also gave water to the soldiers who were sick and tired and helpless. This put life into them and made them well again. But do you think he gave water

only to the Sikh soldiers? No, he gave water to all, to Muhammadans as well as to Sikhs.

This was made known to the Guru by some Sikhs. They did not want Bhai Kanhaiya to help their enemies. "The Muhammadans are our enemies," said they. "We wish to defeat them and kill them. But this old man is saving their lives by giving them water."

At this the Guru called Bhai Kanhaiya to him. He asked him. "Is it true that you have been giving water to the Muhammadan soldiers?"

"Yes, True King," said the Bhai, "I have been giving water to all, Muhammadans as well as Sikhs. And in doing so, I have been acting upon your own advice. It was you who told us that God's beings are all one. You also told us that we should treat them all alike."

The Guru heard it and thought over it. It was all true. Bhai Kanhaiya had been

doing a really noble thing. So he sent him away with the words, "You are a holy man. Go on doing your noble work."

Those who follow Bhai Kanhaiya are called Seva-panthis or the Men of Service. These men do not beg alms. They live only by honest work. Their greatest pride is to serve others.

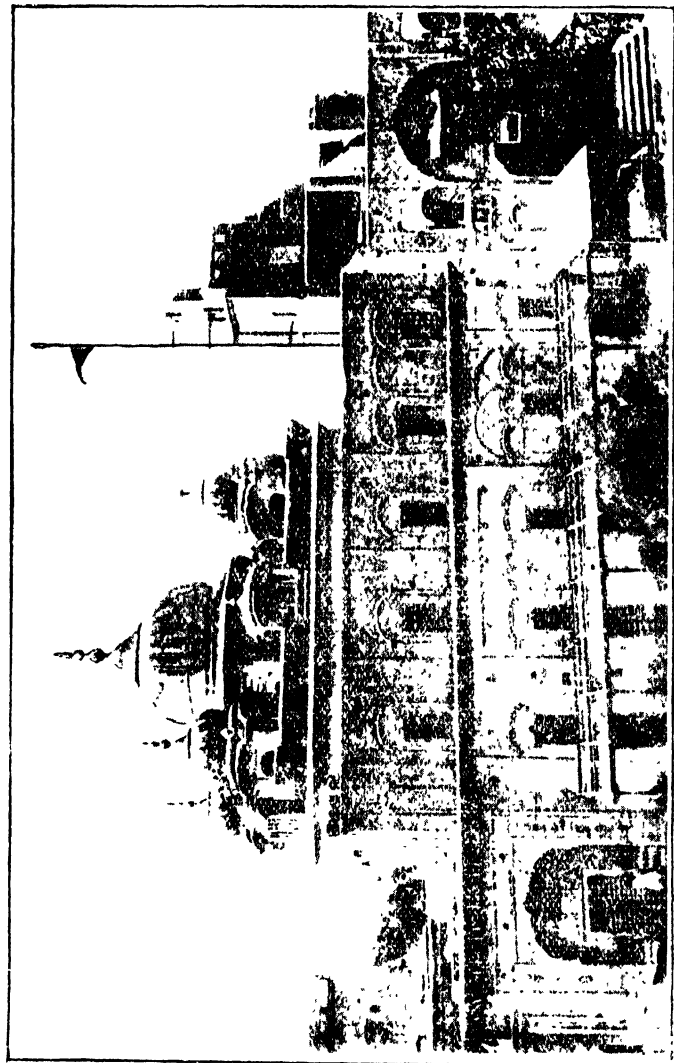
Questions

1. Why did the Sikhs turn to fighting ?
2. Write all you know about Guru Gobind Singh.
3. What happened to Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur ?
4. Write something about Bhai Kanhaiya.

THE FORTY WHO WERE SAVED

HAVE you ever been to Muktsar in the district of Ferozepore ? If you go there, you will see a big tank.

A big fair is held at Muktsar every year in winter on the Maghi day. Thousands of Sikhs go to see this fair, They come



MUKTSAR GURDWARA

from all parts of the Punjab. They think that a visit to Muktsar would do their souls good. It is because the forty Sikhs, called the Immortals, died there. The place has been named after them.

Who were the Forty Immortals ?

Anandpur was the home of Guru Gobind Singh. His enemies wanted to take it. They were the Governors of Sarhind, Delhi and Lahore, assisted by the hill Chiefs of Kangra, Nurpur, Jammu, Chamba and other places. They went there with large armies, and sat down round the place. Their one desire was to turn the Guru out of Anandpur.

The Guru, however, would not leave his home. Many of his soldiers were killed. His food ran short. Yet the Guru did not think of leaving Anandpur. So the enemies did not get what they wanted. What were they to do ?

They said to the Sikhs, "We do not wish to trouble you. We do not like to kill you. But you must leave Anandpur.

If you do so, you will go away as our friends. If you stay here, we shall look upon you as our enemies."

Mata Gujri, mother of Guru Gobind Singh, heard all this. She was very sorry to see the Sikhs in trouble. So she said to her brave son, "My son, change your mind. Leave the fort now and save your people. The Mughals and the Rajahs promise not to harm us if we leave this place. Why should you then have any fears? If you leave, you will get back this place from your enemies. But if you stay here, you and your soldiers will be killed. Have pity on your men whom you love so much. They are dying of hunger, and they can get no help from outside."

When the Sikhs heard what Mata Gujri had said to the Guru, they felt happy. So they also said to the Guru, "We are dying of hunger, O True King. If we stay here, death is certain. If

we leave this place, we shall live and fight our enemies. So be kind to let us go”.

But the Guru would not leave Anandpur. At last he told his people to wait for five days more. Then he would go away with them.

But some Sikh soldiers did not like to wait even for five days. They thought to themselves, “We have been serving the Guru for a long time, but he does not care much for us. We have asked him to leave this place, but he does not listen to us. He asks us to stay here and die of hunger. If we obey him, we die ; but if we leave this place, we shall live. So it is better not to obey the Guru. Let us tell him he is not our Guru, and we are no more his Sikhs. We will not obey him.”

At this some forty Sikhs wrote on a paper that they were not his Sikhs, and handed the paper to him. They left Anandpur. They went back to their homes. But there they felt very sad.

Everybody hated them. Nobody liked to speak to them. None wished to treat them as friends. The people said to them, "You have no courage. You have been false to the Guru. Why did you leave him when he was in difficulty?"

Even their women scorned them, "You are not men," said they, "you are weaker than women. He who calls you men, is himself not a man."

In this way their people put them to shame. So the Sikhs felt sorry for what they had done. They made up their minds to go back to their Guru, and die for him.

The Guru in the meantime had left Anandpur. After going through many troubles, he had gone to Khidrana. The Sikhs also went to that place.

At Khidrana also the Guru was not safe. So he asked a Sikh to sit in a tree, and look out for the enemy. He was to tell the Guru when the enemy was coming.

One day the Sikh said, "The enemy is coming." On hearing this the Guru took up his bow and arrows, and rode out on his horse. He went to a sand-hill, and watched the enemy from there. They were moving forward towards the city. At last they were stopped on their march by some Sikhs. Who were these men? They were the forty Sikhs. They had left the Guru. But now they had come back to him.

After leaving their homes they had come to Khidrana. They had been told that the Guru was there. But before they were able to see the Guru, they found that the enemy was also going to that place.

The soldiers of the enemy did not like to leave the Guru alone. They wished to drive him away even from Khidrana. But these Sikhs made up their minds to push the enemy away. The enemy's men were many and they were but a few, but this

did not fill them with fear. They fought bravely. Some of them died fighting. Others were badly wounded.

After the battle was over, the Guru went to the battlefield. There he saw something strange. The Sikhs who had fought were the same who had left him some time ago. They had come back to save him. Some of them had been killed in the battle for his sake.

One of them was Mahan Singh. He lay dying. But when he saw the Guru, he kissed his feet. He then asked him to forgive them. He said, "Forgive us, O Guru. We were fools when we left you."

The Guru took out the paper on which they had written that they were not his Sikhs. He had kept in his pocket all these months. Now he tore it up, and forgave them. He said, "It is never too late to mend. The Sikh soldiers who have died for me shall after this be called

‘Immortals.’ They will be called by this name, for they have been so brave. Such men never die.”

And thus it was that they came to be known as the Forty Immortals. They are spoken of with respect in the daily prayer of the Sikhs.

Questions

1. Where is Muktsar ?
2. Why did the forty Sikhs leave Guru Gobind Singh ?
3. Why did they again come back ?
4. Write in your own words the story of the Forty Immortals.

THE FIVE BELOVED ONES

BAISAKHI is our New Year's Day. Two hundred and fifty years ago a very big event took place on this day. A great fair was held at Anandpur. To this people came from all parts of the Punjab. They came in large numbers.

When Guru Gobind Singh saw so many good and fearless Sikhs at Anandpur, he

felt happy. He ordered that carpets should be spread on a piece of high ground. He also said that the open place near it should have tent walls round it.

People did not know what was in the Guru's mind. The Guru said to a trusted Sikh quietly, "Go to the place at midnight and tie five goats there. Do not tell this to anyone. Tell the people that they should not go within the tent walls."

Next day the Guru rose very early. First of all, he read the Japji Sahib. Then he said his prayers. After this he put on his clothes and his arms. Then he told the people that there would be a big meeting in the open air.

On hearing this the Sikhs ran to the place fixed for the meeting. There everyone took his seat. They did so because they wished to hear the words of the Guru. His words always filled them with courage and hope.

When all had taken their seats, the

Guru rose from his seat. He drew his sword and asked the Sikhs, "Is there any one here who is ready to lay down his life for me?" At this everybody grew silent. The hearts of the weak Sikhs sank within themselves.

For some time the Guru received no reply. Then he asked the same question once again. Even then the people kept silent. But the Guru was strong in mind. He asked a third time, "If there is any true Sikh here, let him give me his life. I want his head for an offering."

What reply could the people give? They had gone there only to see and hear the Guru. They had not gone there to give away their lives. But they did not know the mind of the Guru. He was testing their faith.

At last one Daya Ram of Lahore rose and said, "O True King, I am ready to give away my life. Do what you like with it."

The Guru's face shone with joy at this. He took Daya Ram into the tent. He asked him to sit there. He cut off a goat's head with his sword and came out. He showed to the Sikhs the sword from which drops of blood were falling. At this many grew pale with fear.

The Guru asked again, "Is there any other true Sikh who will give me his life?" This question of the Guru made people really afraid. "What is the matter with the Guru?" they asked. "He has already taken the life of poor Daya Ram. Is he not satisfied with that? Why does he want more blood?"

Since no one came forth, the Guru asked the same question a second and a third time.

At the third call Dharam Das of Delhi answered, "O Great King, take my life." The Guru then looked stern. He took

Dharam Das to the tent. There he asked him to sit near Daya Ram. He then killed another goat. Again he came back to the Sikhs with the sword in his hand. The drops of blood were still falling from the sword.

You can imagine how the Sikhs must have felt when he asked for the head of a third man. This made them fear that the Guru had gone mad.

So they went to his mother and said, "The Guru does not know what he is doing. He has already killed two Sikhs, but is not satisfied with that. He asks for more blood. It is time for you to help us. Please ask him to stop this."

The mother heard all this. She sent word to Guru Gobind Singh. But the Guru would not listen to anyone. He did not care for what others said. He wanted to do what he thought to be good.

The Guru's words were full of charm and force. They moved all hearts. One

Muhkam Chand of Dwarka heard them and said, "O True King, you can take my life, if you like."

Upon this the Guru took him to the tent. There he killed another goat. He then showed the sword covered with blood to the Sikhs.

The people now thought that the Guru had killed too many people. But he did not appear to think so. He called out for a fourth Sikh. He asked him also to lay down his life.

This put all in fear of their lives. They thought that the Guru wanted to kill everybody. So some ran away from the place to save their lives. Others stood with their heads bowed down with shame. At last one Sahib Chand of Bidar came forward and said, "True King, take my life. It is not of any other use." The Guru did as he had done before. Then he came forth and asked for a fifth Sikh's life.

At this most of the other Sikhs left the place. They ran this way and that to save themselves. Amongst those who stayed behind was one Himmat of Jaggannath. He said to the Guru, "You can take my life, if you please." The Guru took him also inside the tent, and killed the last goat.

He then looked at the five true Sikhs. His heart leapt with joy. He said to them, "You are mine, and I am yours. There is no difference between you and me."

He asked them to put on beautiful clothes. After this he said, "Come back to the place where you will find me with the other Sikhs."

They did so. The people who looked at them wondered how beautiful they looked. They also wondered how very wise the Guru was. In their hearts they were ashamed of themselves.

The Guru then spoke thus: "In the

time of Guru Nanak there was one true Sikh, Bhai Lahna, but now we have five. The Sikh religion, therefore, will live and no one will be able to harm it. At the same time, the people were baptised before us with the water in which the Gurus had washed their feet. This was a mark of humility. But now, if we are to live, we should be brave and should know the use of arms. In future, therefore, at the time of their baptism, the Sikhs shall drink water stirred with a dagger. It shall be called **Amrit** or the Water of Life. This water will turn jackals into lions, weak people into brave soldiers."

After this the Guru poured water into an iron vessel. He stirred it with a sword. He also repeated over it some sacred verses. His wife came at that time with sweetmeats, called **patasha**. The Guru put the sweets into the water and said, "Now that I have put sweets



THE FIVE BELOVED ONES

into the water, the Sikhs will live in peace with each other."

After that he asked the five Sikhs to stand up. He told them to sing a hymn. When they had repeated the first verse of the Japji, he gave them five palmfuls of the **Amrit** to drink. He also said to them, "You are now **Singhs** or lions. You must wear long hair, a comb, a sword, a pair of drawers and a steel bracelet. You should practise arms. You should never run away from the battlefield. You should help the poor. You should protect those who seek your help."

When the five Sikhs had been baptised, the Guru stood up before them with folded hands. He asked them to baptise him. They felt they were not fit to do so, but he asked them again to do it. At last they did as they were asked to do. The Guru was also baptised. He called the five Sikhs his **Panch Payare** or the Five Beloved Ones.

Questions

1. Write in your own words the story of the Five Beloved Ones.
2. What did Guru Gobind Singh say to them ?
3. Why were the people afraid of the Guru that day ?
4. What did they say to his mother ?

AMRITSAR

BANARAS is a holy city of the Hindus. Mecca is a sacred city of the Muhammadans. So Amritsar is a holy city of the Sikhs.

Four hundred years ago Amritsar was a small village. Guru Ram Das, the fourth Guru of the Sikhs, dug a tank there. This was called **Amritsar** or "The Tank of Immortality". The city, which grew round the tank, was called Ramdaspur. It was named after its founder.

Guru Arjun, the next Guru, carried on the work of his father. He built a beautiful temple in the centre of the tank. It is now called the Golden Temple.

Guru Arjun made this town the chief city of the Sikhs. He named it Amritsar after the tank of that name.

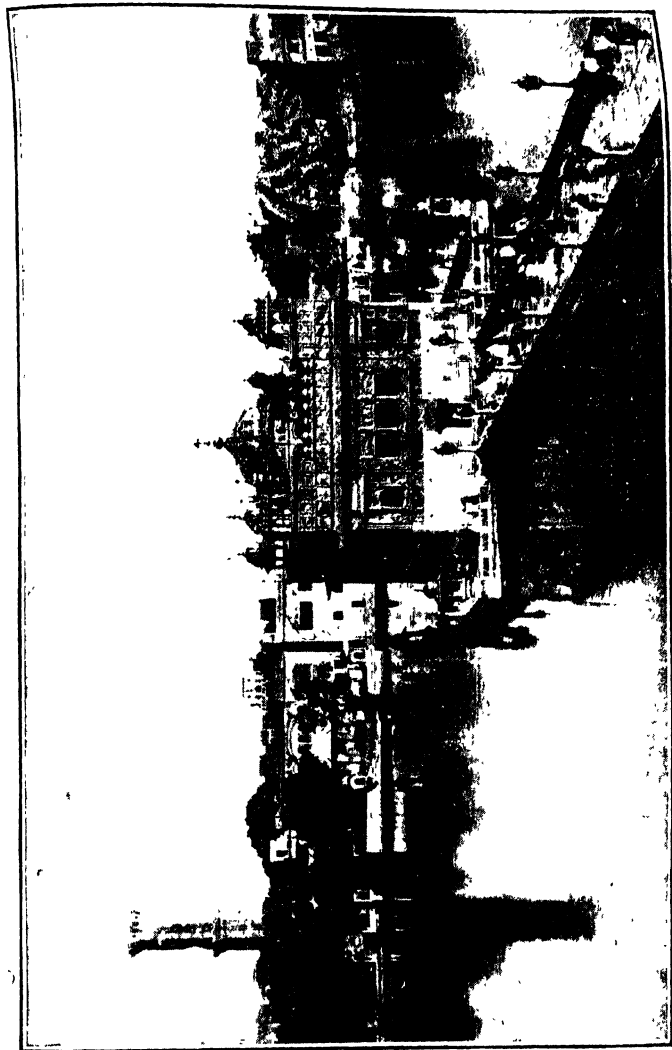
The city grew bigger and bigger. Its people grew richer and richer every day. When the Sikhs began to fight, it was still their chief town.

In the middle of the eighteenth century Ahmad Shah Abdali, the ruler of Kabul, fell upon the city. He pulled down the temple and filled up the tank. This hurt the Sikhs very much.

But they began to build the city again. They built the temple and dug out the tank. They made the city better in many other ways.

As days went by Amritsar grew bigger and bigger. At last Ranjit Singh came to rule over the Punjab. As a good Sikh he wanted to make Amritsar the first city in the Punjab.

He wished to make the temple beautiful. So he spent large sums of money on it. It was he who placed



THE GOLDEN TEMPLE, AMRITSAR

sheets of copper gilt on the temple. Then it came to be known as the Golden Temple.

But Amritsar is known not only for this. It is also a great centre of trade. Two fairs are held there every year, one at the Baisakhi in April, the other at the Diwali in October. These fairs were at first only religious, but now they are also useful for trade. A big market is also held for buying and selling horses and cattle.

Amritsar is known for its shawls. They are made by Kashmiri weavers. Carpets also are made there. They fetch good prices.

The city is well known for its silk goods. Among other things, you can get there soap, carved wood, ivory and brass work. It also does a good deal of trade in cloth, grain and ghee.

If you ever go to Amritsar, you should not forget to see "The Golden Temple". Its walls are made of marble. Its dome is covered with copper gilt. Under the

dome you will find the Guru Granth Sahib, the sacred book of the Sikhs. Round the temple you will find the tank full of clear water. The buildings round this tank are good to look at.

The best known of all these buildings is the Akal Takht, or the Throne of God.

In this place are kept the swords and other things of the Gurus.

There is a tower known as the Baba Atal. It was built to keep alive the name of a son of Guru Har Gobind. He was Baba Atal. The tower is nine storeys high, because the boy was nine years old when he died.

Other buildings near it are also very high. If you go to the top of this tower you will have a fine view of the city.

Another place of interest is the Town Hall. In it are the pictures of the great leaders of the city. The Hall Bazaar is the main market. The Ram Bagh, the beautiful garden of Ranjit

Singh, is a fine place for an evening walk. The fort of Gobindgarh, to the west of the city, was built by Ranjit Singh. It is fine to look at even now.

The Durgiana is a temple in the midst of a tank. It was built by the Hindus. It is visited by a large number of people every day.

People also go to see the Khalsa College. It has very fine buildings and playgrounds. Students from all parts of the Punjab go there to study.

Questions

1. What was Amritsar first called ?
2. Who built the temple in the tank ?
3. What is Amritsar known for ?
4. Name the places of interest at Amritsar.

SIKH SOLDIERS

INDIA has many fighting people. There are the Dogras. They make quiet, clean and hardy soldiers. There are the Jats. They are tall men. They are not very

quick, but they fight bravely. The Mahrattas are quick, and the Garhwalis are brave.

The Sikhs also make good soldiers. Some time ago an Englishman wrote about the Sikh soldiers: They are very brave. They can bear hunger and cold. To them a march of fifty miles a day is nothing. They do not care for rich food. They can live on a little parched gram, which they wash down their throats with cold water. When they move out, they do not take any tents with them. They do not need many things. All they take with them is a *lota* for water and two blankets. One blanket they use for themselves. With the other they cover their horse”.

This was written about the Sikh soldiers many years ago. It does not mean that they have now changed. They are as brave now as they were before.

You know the First World War. It was



A SIKH SOLDIER OF OLD

fought against the Germans. Sikh soldiers took part in it as friends of the British. There they did many acts of bravery. They showed themselves to be among the finest soldiers in the world. This will be clear from what follows.

A Havildar was in command of his section. He had been a physical instructor in a school. Once he and his men were attacked by the Germans. The Germans were many. So they killed most of the Havildar's men. Still the Havildar did not lose heart. He went on fighting with his bayonet. In this way he alone killed many soldiers of the enemy.

After some time he found that his sword and other arms were useless. Some of them had been bent. Others had become unfit for use. But this did not fill him with fear. He took a sword from the hand of a dying soldier.

With this he went on fighting. While fighting he received five wounds. Even

then he did not lay down his sword, In the end he returned from the field. He had driven away the Germans, but was very ill. It took him a year to get over his wounds.

There is another story which shows the bravery of the Sikhs in France.

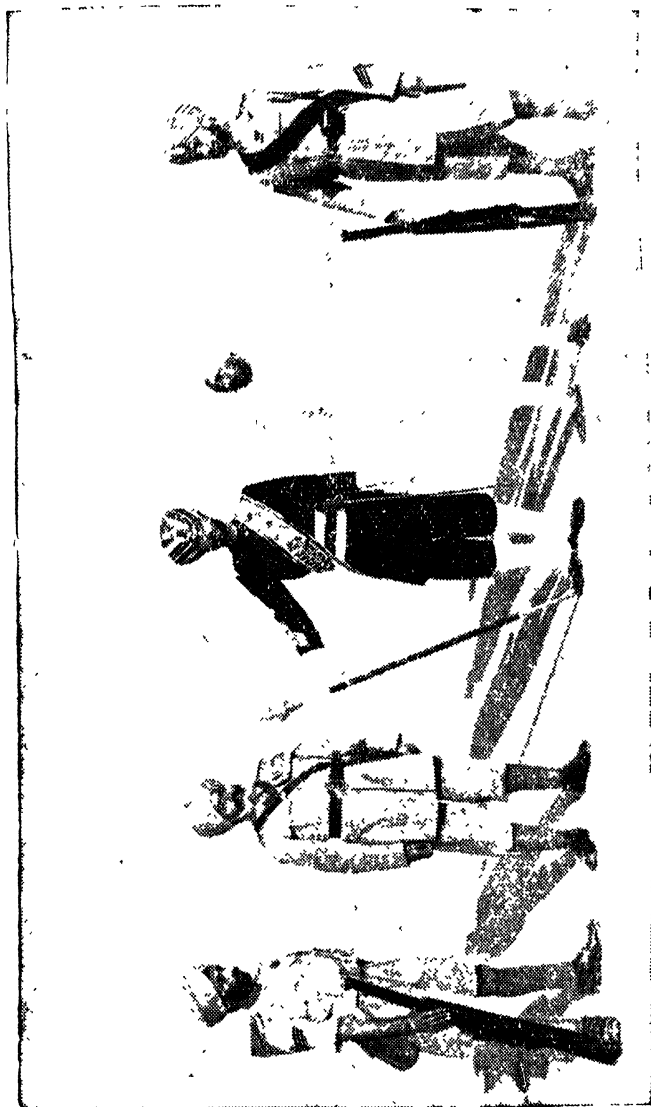
A trench was held by a Company of the 15th Sikhs. The enemy, in large numbers, lay near. They were preparing themselves for an attack.

In order to fight well the Sikhs needed bombs. But from where could they get them ?

An officer said that he would carry the bombs over a distance of two hundred and fifty yards, But could he have done that alone ?

Ten Sikhs got ready to go with him. Each of them carried with him a hundred bombs in boxes. Thus they moved on for sixty yards.

But then they came under heavy fire. Man after man was shot dead. At last



SIKH SOLDIERS OF TODAY

only three were left when they had reached within thirty yards of their goal. The bombs were, however, quite safe.

By this time the Germans had come to know why these soldiers were going that way. They fired shots at them in such large numbers that the Sikh soldiers could go no further. The boxes were, therefore broken open.

The three Sikhs then carried as many bombs with them as they could. One of them was then shot dead, and only two were left. Still on they went, crawling over the dead and the wounded. Thus walking through mud and water, they at last reached their goal.

An English General, to whom this story was told, said, "Who will not say, after hearing this story, that the Sikhs are *Singhs* (lions) ?"

Similar stories are told of the Sikhs' bravery shown in the Second World War.

Questions

1. What do you know about the Sikh soldiers ?

2. Between whom was the First World War fought ?
3. On which side did the Sikhs fight ?
4. Tell in your own words two stories which show the bravery of the Sikh soldiers.
5. Relate any story you may have heard of the Sikhs' bravery in the Second World War.

PRINCE NAU NIHAL SINGH'S MARRIAGE

IN the year 1837 the city of Amritsar saw a scene of great joy. Prince Nau Nihal Singh, the grandson of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, was to be married. The Maharaja wished that the marriage should be the best of its kind in the history of the Punjab. He and his sardars, therefore spent much time and money in making preparations for it.

The Rajas of Patiala, Jind, Nabha Faridkot and Kapurthala, the Nawab of Maler Kotla and the hill Rajas of Mandi and Nurpur came to take part in the marriage. British officers were also asked to come. Only one of them, Sir Henry

Fane, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in India, was able to join.

The General was first met by Prince Sher Singh and others at Hari ka Pattan, on the Sutlej. Five miles away from Amritsar, Sir Henry Fane was received by Prince Kharak Singh, the Prime Minister and other high state officers. First he was given a purse of five thousand rupees. It was to be given away in charity. Then he was taken to his camp. He was followed by 3,000 horsemen. Their clothes shone bright with jewels.

Among those who went to receive the Commander-in-Chief, Raja Dhian Singh, the Prime Minister, looked the best. The dress he had on was very fine. It was covered all over with jewels. The horse he rode had been brought from Persia. Its saddle and bridle were worked with gold. It is said that on the breast of the Prime Minister shone a French breastplate.

The Commander-in-Chief was then taken to his camp. There he was given twenty-one hundred *budkis* of gold and five hundred trays of sweetmeats.

The next day he met the Maharaja in his garden-house in the Ram Bagh. The Lion of the Punjab, though old, was yet strong. He was dressed in yellow, and rode an elephant. He was followed by his sardars. They were covered with gold, silver and jewels.

The meeting took place under a canopy, in front of the house of the Maharaja. It is said that its floor was covered with Kashmir shawls. The canopy itself was spread on silver poles. The Maharaja, on meeting the General, asked him many questions about the British army. The General told him how the army moved and fought.

That very day marriage presents were given to the bridegroom. Sir Henry Fane presented eleven thousand rupees ; Raja

Dhian Singh one lakh and twenty-five thousand. In all, the presents were worth fifty lakhs of rupees.

The next day the bridegroom put on the marriage wreath at the Golden Temple. There the Maharaja made an offering of five hundred rupees to the Granth Sahib. He also gave away large sums of money in charity.

In the afternoon the marriage party left for Attari, in the district of Amritsar. There the bride's father lived. On the way the Maharaja gave away money to the thousands of the poor who stood on both sides of the road.

Thus the marriage party reached the house of Sardar Sham Singh. Then guns were fired, drums were beaten, and pipes and trumpets were sounded. Sardar Sham Singh presented the Maharaja with one hundred and one gold mohars and five horses. The princes and the sardars also got mohars and horses.

Then the bridegroom was taken to the castle of the Sardar. There the people were waiting to receive him. First, he met the people present. After this, the marriage itself took place. The marriage being over, there was a show of fire-works.

The next day a big enclosure was made in the open. It was five miles round, and had eighty gateways. At all the gates stood soldiers. Their duty was to see that none went out without receiving a rupee. They also took care to see that a person who had received the money once did not come for it again. It is said in this way more than ten lakhs of rupees were given away.

This was a grand thing. The dowry too was grand. The bridegroom was given one hundred horses with golden saddles and bridles, one hundred and one cows, one hundred and one she-buffaloes, one hundred camels, eleven elephants, ornaments worth thousands of rupees, gold and

silver utensils, silk shawls, jewels and pearls.

After the marriage the party went back to Lahore. The next day in the Shalamar Gardens a great feast was held. The garden was lighted with many lamps, and flowers were seen everywhere. It looked like a garden of fairies.

After doing everything for the guests the Maharaja showed his army to the General. The army was eighteen thousand strong. It was well armed and clothed. The Maharaja was also pleased to see the British army. He learnt many useful things about war from the General.

Then Sir Henry Fane was shown all the jewels. He saw also the Holi festival. At that time the Maharaja, with his own hands, covered him with red and yellow saffron.

After this the General took his leave. Beautiful shawls, swords, an elephant.

and horses were presented to him.

Questions

1. Who was Prince Nau Nihal Singh ?
2. Who came to take part in the Prince's marriage ?
3. Who was Sir Henry Fane ?
4. How was the Commander-in-Chief received ?

SARAGARHI

YOU know how brave Sikh soldiers are ! They never fear danger. They do not lose their heart in times of difficulty. They die fighting on the battlefield, but never run away from it.

Many stories are told about their bravery. They all know that the Sikhs will die, but will not give way to the enemy. It is said that no one can put down the spirit of the Khalsa. He always remains proud. He is fearless to the end.

There is a story about Saragarhi. This will show how fearless the Sikh soldiers are.

Saragarhi is a mile and a half from Fort Lockhart in the North-West Frontier Province. It is not really a fort, but an army outpost. Let us see how the Sikhs held it on September 12, 1898, against the Afridis.

Twenty-one soldiers of the 36th Sikhs were posted at Saragarhi. They had never been to war. But they were soon to know what war was like. They were attacked by one thousand Pathans who all carried arms. It was thus a case of twenty-one against a thousand.

You will think that the Sikh soldiers were filled with fear, when they saw so many enemies. No, they were not at all afraid. The Pathans attacked them again and again, but they did not give way.

This went on for more than six hours. The enemies fired at the Sikhs. They wounded and killed some of them. But even this did not make them give up the fort.

At last the soldiers in Fort Lockhart heard of the helpless condition of the Sikhs at Saragarhi. One hundred of them set out to help them. But they were driven back before they could reach Saragarhi.

Thus the Sikhs at Saragarhi were left alone. They, and they alone, had to save themselves.

For a long time the Afridis were unable to enter the fort by the big gate. They then thought of another way to get in. Without being seen by anybody, some of them began to cut their way through one of the walls. This they were able to do. When the Sikh soldiers saw them inside the fort, they shot some of them dead.

There is a story about a Sikh soldier. He was lying wounded on a charpai, but he still fired at the Pathans. Even though he was himself dying, he killed four of his enemies. He wounded many more of them.

At last only one Sikh was left in the guard-room. Before he died, he killed twenty of the Afridis.

In this way twenty-one Sikhs killed two hundred of their enemies. They wounded many more. Thus they died, holding the fort till the last.

Many English writers have praised the bravery of the Sikh soldiers at Saragarhi. They say it is only the Sikh soldier who will fight against such large numbers with such courage.

In honour of those Sikhs who had died at **Saragarhi** two memorials were set up by the British Government. One is at Amritsar and the other at Ferozepore.

Questions

1. Where is Saragarhi ?
2. How many Sikhs were there at Saragarhi ?
3. What do you know about the Pathans ?
4. Write in your own

Saragarhi.

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